

OBITUARY



RAYMOND ALEXANDER ST. GEORGE  
1894-1982

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With the passing of Raymond A. St. George in 1982, the Society lost a former President and an Honorary Member. He joined the Society soon after coming to the area in 1918, attended meetings regularly, and served as President in 1956. In 1975, he was elected an Honorary Member.

Saint (as he was known to his friends) was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, September 10, 1894. He attended Massachusetts Agricultural College (now University of Massachusetts), studied entomology under the well-known Dr. Henry T. Fernald, and graduated in 1918. It is probable he developed an early interest in forest insects because of the concern for the gypsy moth and the attention given to it in the teaching program at the College. Classmates included Harlan P. Worthley and Warren D. Whitcomb who went to Pennsylvania State College and Waltham Field Station in Massachusetts, respectively, to engage in the fields of economic entomology.

In 1919, Saint married Julia Florence Gustafson and they had four sons. They lived in Falls Church, Virginia, and later in Arlington. About 1942, they moved to College Park, Maryland.

Saint was first employed in the Division of Forest Insects, Bureau of Entomology, U.S. Department of Agriculture, at Falls Church under the direction of

A. D. Hopkins, whom F. Schwerdtfeger of Göttingen, Germany, called "the first real forest entomologist in North America" (Smith, R. F., T. E. Mittler, and C. N. Smith. 1973. *History of Entomology*. Annual Reviews, Inc., Palo Alto, Calif. 517 pp.). Early associates of St. George were Frank C. Craighead and Thomas E. Snyder. During this time, Saint took graduate work at George Washington University and was awarded the Masters Degree in 1923.

Saint began work on the destructive southern pine beetle at Asheville, North Carolina, in 1924 in cooperation with the Appalachian Forest Experiment Station of the U.S. Forest Service. For some years the station was equipped only for summer work carried on in tents. Saint also supervised the white grub studies at Georgetown, South Carolina.

In 1934, Saint was transferred to the Washington office of the Bureau to handle correspondence and to prepare publications on various wood-infesting insects. A little later he established soil treatment plots for tests against subterranean termites at Beltsville, Maryland, plots that are still examined periodically by Raymond H. Beal. Saint also tested chemical injections in live trees to protect them against insect attack and decay after they were cut and used in contact with soil.

The in-house publication *BEPQ Activities* for December 1952 carried a picture of "St. George and the Dragons," walkingsticks that he had collected in western Maryland, where it was said "400 acres of hardwood trees were defoliated." Notice of the outbreak by newsmen and photographers resulted in nationwide coverage.

In his early years, Saint became interested in the taxonomy of larvae of Tenebrionidae and related families. During his career, he published important articles on the following subjects: powderpost beetles and their parasites, southern pine beetle, false wireworms, eastern subterranean termite, mimosa webworm, and the protection of log cabins and rustic furniture from insect attack.

On retirement in 1964, a newspaper carried this story, quoted in part, "Saint's almost encyclopedic knowledge of insect pests of forest trees, forest products, shade trees, and ornamentals, has been a source of amazement and admiration for his younger, more specialized colleagues. His retirement removes a source of general information on these subjects that will be sorely missed."

Retirement did not stop his usefulness. Saint often appeared as an expert witness in court litigation on termite and other wood-infesting insect control cases. He contributed to pest control manuals and trade journals.

Saint was a member of the Entomological Society of America and the Biological Society of Washington. He was a long time Rotarian with a record of perfect attendance at the College Park, Maryland Club and served as President in 1962-1963. He was an active member of the University United Methodist Church, College Park, and was also a director of the YMCA. He was a devotee to bowling and golf.

Saint spent his last years with his son, J. Richard and family, in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. His daughter-in-law, Kitty, called him a Man of Quality. Others say Saint had remarkable enthusiasm for helping people with their insect problems and that he was a good friend to everyone he knew. Saint died at Ft. Wayne on September 12, 1982.

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